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BF&M revision released by committee

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP and local reports) — The recommendations of the Baptist Faith and Message (BF&M) Study Committee for a new edition of the historic document incorporate portions of the 1925 and 1963 editions, with some revisions but no new articles, according to Adrian Rogers, chairman of the committee.

Included in the revisions is an addition to Article VI: The Church which the committee said speaks "clearly [the convention's] conviction that while both men and women are gifted and called for ministry, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture." There are 18 articles in the statement which includes an article on the family added in 1998 at the Salt Lake City convention.

The BF&M Study Committee was authorized by messengers to the 1999 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta. The convention authorized President Paige Patterson to name a committee to review the historic document and report back to the 2000 annual meeting.

The 15-person committee, which did not include any Mississippi Baptist representatives, met a number of times in the past year.

Rogers, longtime pastor of Bellevue Church in metro Memphis, said the committee wanted to release the report now to give Southern Baptists enough time to "familiarize themselves" with the recommendations before the June 13-14 annual meeting in Orlando.

"We were guided by the rich heritage embodied in the 1925 and 1963 editions of the BF&M," Rogers said. "We have sought to retain all the strengths of that noble heritage, to clarify the truths there expressed, and to address the needs of our own times."

"Baptists cherish our doctrinal inheritance. We are a people of the Book, who recognize no other authority for faith and practice but God's Word. Thus, we receive and affirm those doctrines revealed in the Bible, and we are unembarrassed to take our stand upon the solid rock of biblical authority."

"Our confessions represent statements of those doctrines revealed in the Bible. The Bible is the source of our authority, not merely a support for our historic doctrines."

The Southern Baptist Convention first adopted the BF&M in 1925 as a public statement of Southern Baptists' faith and doctrine. Nearly 40 years later, faced with new challenges and questions, Rogers said, the

which we must now proclaim the Gospel.

"Our profound respect for the heritage of the previous statements is reflected in the intentional decision of our committee to incorporate language from both the 1925 and 1963 editions in our recommendation. Both of these historic statements speak to the present, as well as the past."

Rogers said the preface to

"We have proposed no new articles. Several of the articles are presented without any revision at all. Our recommendation is intended to clarify our doctrines for this present age, and to define our beliefs against the backdrop of modern confusion."

"Our hope is that a rising generation of Baptists will recognize the significance of our biblical doctrines, embrace our Baptist heritage, and own this confession of faith for themselves."

Study committee members, in addition to Rogers, were Jerry Vines, pastor of First Church, Jacksonville, Fla.; R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., and a member of Highview Church, Louisville; Steve Gaines, pastor of First Church, Gardendale, Ala.; Heather King, state WMU/women's ministries director for the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana and member of Northside Church, Indianapolis; Simon Tsoi, pastor of First Chinese Baptist Church, Phoenix; T.C. Pinckney, member of Good News Church, Alexandria, Va.; Susie Hawkins, member of Prestonwood Church, Dallas, and wife of SBC Annuity Board President O. S. Hawkins; Charles Kelley Jr., president of New Orleans Seminary and member of First Church, New Orleans; Roger Spradlin, pastor of Valley Church, Bakersfield, Calif.; Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, Nashville, Tenn., and member of ClearView Church, Franklin; Rudy Hernandez, Hispanic Southern Baptist evangelist and member of Primera Iglesia Bautista, Grand Prairie, Texas; Fred Luter, African American pastor of Franklin Avenue Church, New Orleans; Max Barnett, Baptist Student Union director at the University of Oklahoma and member of Trinity Church, Norman, Okla.; and Nelson Price, pastor of Roswell Street Church, Marietta, Ga.

Editor's note: The full text of the proposed revision can be found on pages four and five of this issue. The text can also be viewed at www.sbc.net.

Trinity Church, Southaven receives 20th Eagle Award



Trinity Church, Southaven, was honored by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention during the March 5 morning worship service. The church was awarded its 20th Eagle Award for excellence in Sunday School growth. Jimmy Draper (second from right), president of LifeWay, stated, "Trinity Baptist Church has now received more Eagle Awards than any other church in the Southern Baptist Convention." Standing with Draper are (from left) are John Miller, Trinity Church minister to adults; Jim Butler, Trinity pastor; and Travis Bundrick, Trinity minister of education. (BR special photo)

convention adopted a revised edition of the BF&M in 1963.

"Now, again nearly 40 years after the convention's last comprehensive action, a new generation must take up the stewardship of the faith 'once for all delivered to the saints' (Jude 3)."

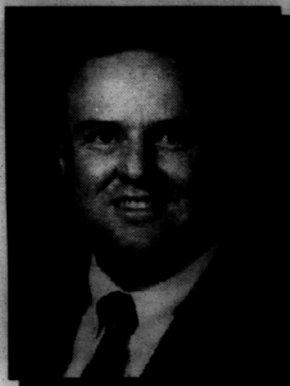
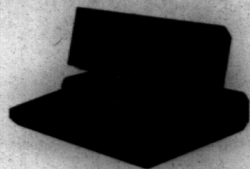
"Our generation faces the reality of a postmodern culture, complete with rampant relativism and the denial of absolute truth," Rogers said. "A pervasive secularism has infected our society and its corrosive effects are evident throughout the life of our nation. Moral decay and assaults upon cherished truths dominate the arena in which we must now minister, and to

the report sets forth the rationale and method.

"With the 1963 committee, we cite the principle set forth by our forebears in 1925: 'As in the past, so in the future, Baptists should hold themselves free to revise their statements of faith as may seem to them wise and expedient,'" Rogers said.

"We now propose a new edition of our honored confession. This generation must set forth its witness to the truths revealed in the Bible. Where necessary, we have proposed changes and additions to certain sections. We have retained the structure of the confession and the substance of each article," Rogers said.

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Revising the Baptist Faith and Message

The proposed revision of the Baptist Faith and Message (BF&M) was released last week for consideration by Southern Baptists and the messengers they will send from their respective churches to vote on the document at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) on June 13-14 in Orlando.

Acting on a mandate from messengers to the 1999 annual meeting, SBC President Paige Patterson appointed a 15-member Committee on the Baptist Faith and Message to consider revisions and provide a report to the 2000 annual meeting. Accordingly, the committee released their report on May 18.

As expected, there have been early reactions to the revision. Some folks believe the BF&M wasn't broken and didn't need fixing. Others feel the current culture war calls loudly for updating our foundational statement of beliefs, to address issues the original authors could not possibly have foreseen as major problems in our day.

Still others don't know what all the fuss is about, since they've never seen a copy of the BF&M in their lifetimes. While the Bible serves all of us as the ultimate statement of our beliefs, it's still embarrassing that so many Southern Baptists — inarguably a majority — have never glanced at their own BF&M.

That's a shame. The BF&M is an elegant, concise explanation of who we are and what we believe as a denomination. It is not a creed, and no one has to pledge allegiance to it before being baptized into a Southern Baptist church. That is as it should be.

Over the next two issues, *The Baptist Record* will publish the proposed revision of the BF&M (today's issue) and a side-by-side comparison of the proposed revision with the latest, 1963 version of the BF&M (next week's issue).

In keeping with Baptist tradition, you can study the proposed revision for yourself and make up your own mind about it after prayerful consultation with the Lord.

You can have a say in the direction of the BF&M, but it would be a good idea to first polish up on Southern Baptist polity — the way we govern ourselves.

There seems to be a great deal of confusion, misinformation, and just plain ignorance about how we govern ourselves in general, and specifically how we go about revising articles like the BF&M, our core belief statement.

Our denominational governance is breathtaking in its

simplicity. The bureaucracies we have installed to handle the business of the largest Protestant denomination in the world can be vexing (especially if one has gotten lost in the growing number of voice-mail systems being installed across the convention), but our polity is crystal clear.

The Southern Baptist Convention, the Mississippi Baptist Convention, the county associations, and individual churches are independent bodies that have chosen to work together for the greater goal of helping to bring the world to Jesus.

Among the magnificent, God-inspired ways we have banded together to achieve that goal are:

- the Cooperative Program, to pool our financial resources.
- LifeWay Christian Resources, the publishing house for Southern Baptist materials.
- Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions, to support the missionaries we send to the uttermost parts of the earth with the Gospel message.
- Annie Armstrong Offering for North American Missions, to support the work of the missionaries in our own backyard.
- Established, "old line" state conventions entering partnerships with smaller state conventions and international groups to help build them up.

Mississippi Baptists are currently involved in partnerships with the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware; Baptists in the Eastern European nation of Ukraine; Hurricane Mitch relief efforts and medical/dental missions in Honduras; and next year, with Baptists in the city of Boston as part of the Strategic Focus Cities emphasis.

- associational missions projects.
- local churches responding to community needs.

The list could go on *ad infinitum*. The point is that Southern Baptists have chosen to voluntarily cooperate with each other — and that's the key to the whole system.

Tylertown native James Sullivan, a longtime Southern Baptist leader and one of the greatest Christian statesmen ever produced by any denomination, is credited with describing the voluntary nature of the Cooperative Program as "a rope of sand," but that is also a relevant statement on the entirety of Southern Baptist polity.

When messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention gather each summer to conduct the business of the denomination, it has no binding effect on the other self-governing entities, such as the Mississippi Baptist Convention, the associations, local churches, or even individual Baptists.

Likewise, when the Mississippi Baptist Convention convenes each fall, the positions messengers take on various issues have no binding effect on the Southern Baptist Convention, local associations, local churches, or even individual Baptists.

So it goes up and down the line. We choose to govern ourselves entity by entity and voluntarily associate with each other, and the result has been phenomenal progress toward reaching the goal of our Savior's Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

Of course, any one of the entities can choose a course of action so objectionable that the other entities cannot remain in friendly cooperation with that entity — or the entity may decide that it has no longer has common interests with the others, and leave the fellowship of its own free will.

Those things do happen, but only rarely.

The bottom line is that we have no hierarchal system that hands down edicts with the expectation that everyone must fall into lock step with their ideas. Quite the contrary.

Starting from the "bottom" and moving upward, Southern Baptist churches appoint messengers to associational meetings, the Mississippi Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

This allows the churches to govern the entities — not the other way around.

If you want to make a difference on denominational matters like the BF&M, get yourself appointed as a messenger to one of those meetings and represent your church with integrity.

First and foremost, be in prayer about how God wants you to be involved in the life of your denomination. He will direct our thoughts and actions, if only we listen and heed.

Secondly, when an individual Southern Baptist reaches a reasonable conclusion on whether the BF&M should be revised, it should not be viewed as a test of fellowship or a statement of his/her Christian witness.

The original framers of the BF&M made it clear that they never intended for the document to be used in that fashion.

Lastly, we should never reach a point of contentiousness over such matters that we are distracted from our greatest responsibility — to help bring everyone in Mississippi and the world to Jesus.

Let us remember those points, and everything else will naturally fall into place under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, including the BF&M.



The 'other' Paris: gateway to the unreached

PARIS (BP) — Everyone knows Paris. It's the elegant city of the Eiffel Tower and tourists, the Arc de Triomphe and high fashion, the Louvre Museum and the Mona Lisa, croissants, and sidewalk cafes.

Everyone "knows" that Paris — but there's another Paris you won't see on the postcards: somber suburbs and complexes of grimy, gray concrete high-rises packed with poverty-line immigrants struggling to survive in an alien culture.

This other Paris is a magnet, not for well-heeled tourists, but for newcomers from Africa and the Middle East chasing work permits and jobs and better lives.

Walk through this other Paris and you'll see robed North African Muslims wearing their distinctive "haji" (pilgrimage) hats, and ebony-skinned women from Senegal decked out in long, colorful dresses and head wraps that proclaim they're of the Wolof tribe.

"I have stood in the marches [markets] and in front of the big 'Tati' store complex and counted people from about 35 unreached people groups who are hard to reach with the Gospel in their homelands," says one Southern Baptist worker who serves in Paris.

What a missions challenge for Christian workers.

Consider that Paris has more than 10 million residents — and about a tenth of them are Muslims. Many of these Muslims are from Algeria,



MORE ACCESSIBLE — Tourists from a North African country pose for pictures in front of the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. The good news of God's love is much easier to share with tourists and immigrant residents in Paris, many of whom come from places with little or no access to the gospel, than it is in their home countries. (BP photo by Grace Robinette)

Morocco, Tunisia, or other countries closed to the Gospel. Many of these North Africans keep close ties with family and friends in their homelands.

That's why Southern Baptist workers say Paris is a "Gateway City." They mean that by reaching out to members of unreached people groups in Paris, they can find a "gateway" to lands in the Muslim world that are closed to missionary presence.

For example, it is difficult to get videos of the "Jesus" film into Morocco, but a Christian worker in Paris suggested two Berber women take videos back to their families as gifts.

"Oh, that's a great idea!" one exclaimed. Off went the videos

to a strategic mission field where every positive word spoken of the Gospel is precious.

Hundreds of copies of the "Jesus" film, Bibles, and other Christian materials have made their way into North Africa in this manner.

"People from all over the Muslim world come to Paris," the Southern Baptist worker says. She keeps Gospel-centered materials in many languages on hand so she is prepared when she meets someone from an unreached people group.

While witnessing to Muslims in their home countries can be very difficult — even dangerous — it's easier when the location is Paris.

"People are here out of their element. They are out of their closed family groups, who usually rally around to fight against family members hearing the Gospel. They come to Paris, and they're uprooted, in a state of change. The children are growing up and confronting French culture. There are many conflicts in families," the worker says.

"All these factors make them more open to the Gospel. They're caught by so many changes. Presenting them with the Gospel gives them an anchor, something to hold on to," she says.

The Gospel is not the only force vying for their attention, of course. Still, many immigrants recognize the Bible as a holy book.

"All the children are going to school. Children can read it to their parents," the worker says. "It's easier to distribute Bibles here than in North Africa."

She recently distributed 10,000 New Testaments among Muslim families. As she and other workers went through the towering apartment blocks that predominate here, she was amazed at the diversity of cultures she saw.

Often immigrants come fleeing poverty and searching for the good life in the West. They wind up living in poor, crowded public housing where crime and drugs are common.

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Student conference set for SBC

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP) — Students attending the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting in Orlando this year will have their own track of worship and leadership training activities June 11-12 with the North American Mission Board's (NAMB) first-ever Student Conference 2000. The conference will begin with a rally from 7-9 p.m. June 11 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando.

The Sunday session — offered free of charge to all students — will include a concert and worship and praise led by Foreverafter. David Nasser, a youth speaker associated with Billy Graham crusades across the country, will deliver a special challenge to students. The heart of the conference — focused on developing and equipping student leaders — will take place from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. June 12, with speakers including NAMB President Bob Reccord and SBC President Paige Patterson. NAMB's student evangelism staff also will lead training in campus evangelism. Evangelist Jay Strack will lead the afternoon session, titled "Aim High: Filing a Flight Plan for Life." Strack each summer leads multiple sessions of Student Leadership University, a weeklong training seminar for student leadership offered in Orlando and other locations.

The conference will conclude with a hands-on event at the "WonderWorks" attraction in Orlando. Buses will return to the Orange County Convention Center by 9:15 p.m. Cost for the Monday portion of the conference is \$45 per person, which includes lunch, dinner, materials, and admission to WonderWorks. Deadline for pre-registration is June 5. Registration will also be available at the event in Room 304A of the convention center.

For more information or to register, visit the www.studentz.com/sbc Internet site or call (770) 410-6345.

Looking back

10 years ago

ACTS of Laurel is named affiliate of the year during the fifth annual American Christian Television System Awards ceremony in Fort Worth. In addition to being named affiliate of the year, the Laurel group also takes top honors for best events coverage series for "Football '89."

20 years ago

First Church, Jackson, honors W. Douglas Hudgins on the occasion of the 55th anniversary of his ordination to the Gospel ministry. Hudgins is executive director emeritus of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and pastor emeritus of First Church, Jackson.

50 years ago

Southern Baptists see record gains in 1949, according to Porter Routh, secretary of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. A total of 463 churches were added, with a 4.1% climb in membership and a 7.9% gain in Sunday School enrollment. Baptisms topped 334,000.

Proposed Baptist Faith and Message Revision

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28,6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12,8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24, 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16, 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21:22.

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

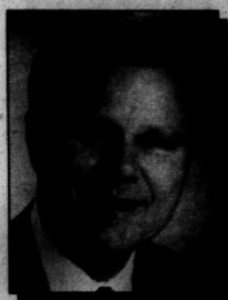
Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

Continued on page five

THE HIGH COST OF LOW LIVING

Growing up in a pastor's home, I went to church a lot more than I wanted to and less than I needed to. Although from time to time I changed churches, I never changed pastors. There was something about the provisions of food and raiment that kept me closely connected to my pastor. I heard my pastor/father preach a lot of sermons! There were both a "lot of them" and a "lot to them." I do not remember all of them, but I do remember hearing him on several occasions preach a sermon that he entitled, "The High Cost of Low Living."

The sermon was based on the life and the lifestyle of Lot. Do you remember the Bible says that Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom? He looked at all that was before him and he pointed his tent/home toward the wicked twin cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. In time, he would not only be leaning toward Sodom and Gomorrah; he would be living in Sodom and Gomorrah. Soon, not only was his heart in Sodom, Sodom



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

was in his heart. Whatever it was that pulled him in that direction, it also captured and kept him there.

I honestly cannot remember all of the things with which my dad dealt in the sermon, but I certainly am aware of the price that was paid, and the Biblical account. While some may see Sodom and Gomorrah as ancient, forgotten cities with little or no relationship to the world today, the truth is that very little has changed about the sinful nature then and the sinful nature now. The cost of low living is still extremely high!

When Lot finally was rescued by God, there was very little left of the man that once was. He was a shell who had

left virtually every good thing on the altar of his own desires. Much of what Lot had was destroyed long before the rain of fire came down on Sodom and Gomorrah. His character and all that it embodied therein had been ruined. Neither his family, nor the folks in the community, had respect for him. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches," the wise man of Proverbs said. Lot lost his good name in the cesspool of Sodom. He lost his family — children who had married into Sodom and stayed; children who came out with him, but still had Sodom within them, and his wife who left but could not keep her heart turned away. As she longingly looked back, her life ended!

There are lessons to be learned from Lot:

- Guard your eyes, for they can lead you where you do not need to go. Millions are being addicted to a "point and click" computer world that literally destroys homes and hearts.

- Keep in mind that wherever you go, whether you know it or not, there are those who are following you. There are moms and dads who are flirting with the sights and sounds of Sodom. Like Lot, they are oblivious to the fact that little eyes are watching and little feet are following.

- It is important for us to keep out of Sodom, but it is more important, by God's grace, to keep Sodom out of us. Sin is hurtful and hideous, whether it is flaunting itself on a street corner or hiding in the deep recesses of a heart.

- Ultimately, sin always demands a payment and it is expensive! That is why, as Christians, we both agonize over the cost and rejoice in the Cross, because God made provision through his wonderful and sinless Son to pay our debt. Hallelujah!

Continued from page four

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian

denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12:14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such free-

dom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7, 24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

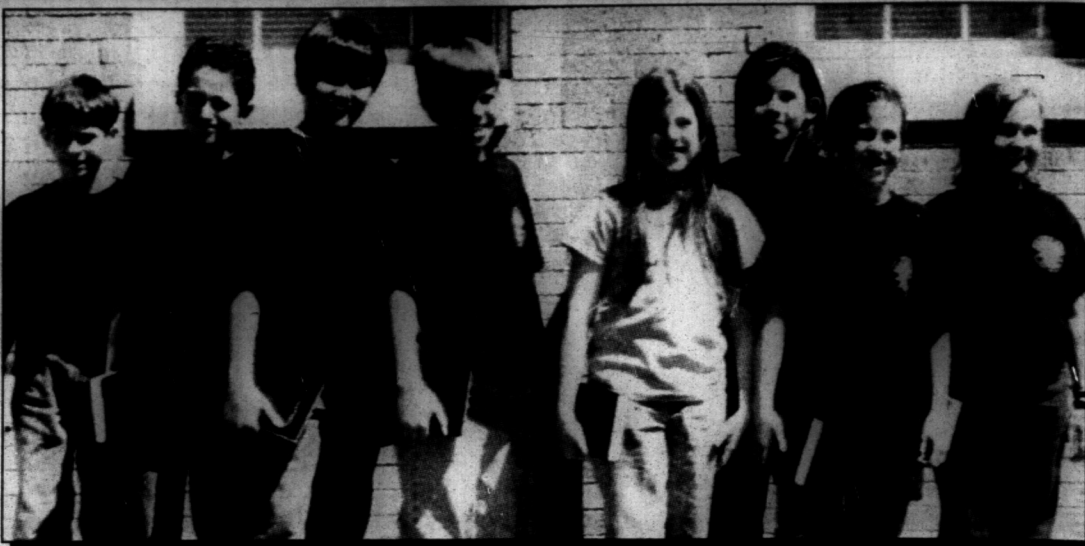
Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



Youth and children from First Church, Oxford, participated in the State Bible Drills in Tupelo on April 6. Pictured (front row, from left) are Kelsey McKeithen, Kelly Fitch, Brandon Cullum, Joshua Locke, back row, Dudley Carter, Barkley Falkner, Michael Stevens, J.K. Wakefield, and Norissa Cullum, leader.



Children of First Church, Oxford

Sixth grade GAs of First Church, Kosciusko, were honored on May 6 by Sue Dorrill and Kelly Middleton, directors of WMU, with a Victorian afternoon tea. GA members are Emily Bush, Jill Clark, Lauren Edwards, Sheridan Hatcher, Suzanne Henry, Elizabeth Nelms, Kayla Parnell, Morgan Roby, Danielle Roos, Ashlee Thrasher, and Mallory Williams. Jennifer Cheek is GA director, and the leaders are Karen Dickerson, Cherie Atwood, and Renee' Henry. Pictured (from left, standing) are Renee' Henry, Kayla Parnell, Sheridan Hatcher; (seated) Jennifer Cheek, Danielle Roos, Lauren Edwards, Emily Bush, and Suzanne Henry.

Children (from left) are Jeremy Locke, Joshua Havins, Reed Falkner, Lane Wakefield, Mary Margaret Mize, Katy Carter, Whitney Wakefield, and Courtney Hunter. Not pictured are Susan Dempsey and Faye Self, leaders. Tom Atwood is pastor.

Woodville Heights Church, Jackson, will present The Picklin' of Mayberry on June 22-24 at 7 p.m. The fourth annual dinner theatre is a play based on the morals and Christian values portrayed in the Andy Griffith television show. For tickets call (601) 372-5443 or 373-6894.

Ground breaking services were held at Branch Church, Morton, for Sunday School annex. Taking part in the ceremony (pictured below) were Norman Huggins, Mitch Mahaffey, Ann Madison, Ernest Lee Coward, Lynn Irby, Dwight Irby, Michael Giles, and Larry Druery. Giles is pastor of Branch Church.



Youth of First Church, Oxford

VBS dates

Delta Church, Yazoo City: May 31-June 2; Wed.-Fri., 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Sat., family night, 4-7 p.m.

Thorn Hill Church, Pelahatchie: June 5-9; 8:30-11:30 a.m. daily; Bobby Tagert, interim pastor.

First Church of Runnelstown, Petal: June 5-9; 8-11 a.m. daily; nursery age through 6th grade.

Wesson, Wesson: June 5-9; 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Leaf River, Smith County: June 5-9; 8:30 a.m.-noon; preschool age through sixth grade; commencement, June 11, 11 a.m. with lunch to follow.



Children of Evergreen Church, Louisville

Evergreen Church, Louisville, had a Valentine party on Feb. 5 for the children's group. A banquet was also held for the youth group on Feb. 4.

Gunter Road Church, Florence, will celebrate its 20th anniversary, Sunday, June 4. Dale Holloway, first pastor, will preach along with the first music director, Rob Smith, who will lead the music. Lunch will be served following the morning service. Gene Jordan is pastor.

A retirement reception will be held for L. Russell Bush Jr. at Main Street Church, Hattiesburg, on May 28 at 7 p.m. in the fellowship hall. A scholarship fund has been established in his name.

MS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER NEEDED. Send resume to: Providence Baptist Church, c/o Dicky Taylor, 301 Fayette Davis Avenue, Cleveland, MS 38732.



Youth of Evergreen Church, Louisville

Ground breaking at Branch Church, Morton

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PRICE HARRIS — MUSIC EVANGELIST Open dates for 2000: June 18; July 23, 30; Aug. 13; Sept. 24; Nov. 26; Dec. 17, 24. Call 318-687-0384 or 318-347-4370. Web page: www.dcw.net/phea E-mail: Phea2@aol.com.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, Jefferson City, Missouri, is seeking a full-time minister of students and recreation. Job description heavily emphasizes "purpose driven" youth ministry. Send resume by June 15 to Personnel Chairman, First Baptist Church, 301 E. Capitol Avenue, Jefferson City, MO 65101.

NAMES IN THE NEWS



Ford and Ham

William "Dub" Ham, who recently retired from serving as treasurer of Spring Cottage Church, Columbia, after more than 47 years, was presented a plaque by Brad Ford, pastor.

Bailey Anglin, Craig Paterson, and Tiffany Stover, competed in the Youth Bible Drill

at Temple Church, Hattiesburg. They went on to represent Temple Church at the Lebanon Association Church Drill and made superior. They also were awarded superior at the State Bible Drill at Petal-Harvey Church, Petal. Stover elected to compete in the quick drill at Alta Woods Church, Jackson, on April 16. Cynthia Anglin and Julie Paterson are Youth Bible Drill directors.

Oral Church, Hattiesburg, congratulates its State Bible Drill winners. Kimberlie Rawls, first year Children, and Micah Mitchell, first year Youth. Micah was winner of a trip to Gulfshore Baptist Assembly for being one of the top 12 finalists at the Bible Drill Tournament at Alta Woods Church, Jackson.



Rawls



Mitchell



Jeanne Nation, (pictured above right) of Duck Hill, received the J.E. Lambdin Scholarship April 25 at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. The \$500 scholarship is given to a student in the School of Christian Education and Leadership who plans to serve in educational ministry within Southern Baptist agencies, institutions, and/or local churches.

West Heights Church, Pontotoc, recently licensed Dustin Gillespie to the ministry. Pictured (from left) are Stephen Evans, minister of youth and education; Gillespie; and David Hamilton, pastor.

Offering goals exceeded

Mt. Zion Church, Brookhaven, exceeds goals. The goal for Lottie Moon Christmas Offering was \$7,000 and amount received was \$7,045.60. Goal for Annie Armstrong Easter Offering was \$2,500 and amount received was \$2,828.

Terry's Creek Church, Magnolia, set a goal for Annie Armstrong Easter Offering of \$3,000. Total amount received was \$4,341.11.



Center Hill Church, Hamilton, held deacon ordination on March 19. Ordained (pictured, from left) are Lester Crow, Tommy Dahlem, Scott Dobbs, Kenny West, and Tommy Sanders. James M. Towery is pastor.

Homecomings

Friendship, Brookhaven: May 28; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; noon meal will be served in fellowship hall followed by an afternoon service; Wiley Reid, guest speaker; Jimmy Houston, pastor.

Rock Hill, Brandon: May 28; 11 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall; Robert L. Jones, Florence, guest speaker; Tim Canterbury, pastor.

Mt. Olive (Carroll): May 28; 10:30 a.m.; covered dish lunch in fellowship hall and singing in the afternoon; Andy Pittman, Maben, former youth director at Mt. Olive Church, speaker.

Roundaway, Doddsville: May 28; worship, 10:45 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds; 1:30 p.m. service; Frank Bishop, guest speaker; The Mixon family singers, musicians.

Thorn Hill, Pelahatchie: May 28; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on grounds at noon followed by a Gospel singing at 1:30 p.m. featuring Hosannas. Bobby Tagert is interim pastor.

Antioch (Lawrence): May 28; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch at noon in fellowship hall; singing in the afternoon with the Gospel 5 and Southern Praise; Leon Wallace, speaker.

New Black Jack, Philadelphia: 144th Anniversary; May 28; worship, 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch; Kenneth Rhodes, director of missions, Pearl River Association, speaker; Richard Ethridge, interim pastor.

Liberty (Carroll): June 4; 10:45 a.m.; singing in the afternoon; J. B. Costilow, speaker.

Calvary, Pricedale: June 4; 11 a.m.; lunch in fellowship hall followed by afternoon song and praise service; G. W. Smith, guest speaker; Providentials, guest singers; Harold Gartman, pastor.

First, Lambert: June 11; services begin at 10:30 a.m.; Walter Shelton, guest speaker; Don O'Quin, pastor.

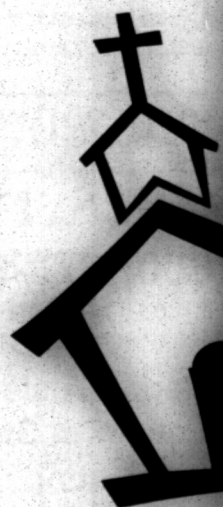


Evans, Gillespie, and Hamilton



Robinhood Church, Brandon, recently held deacon ordination services. Pictured (front row, from left) are Tommy Henry and Joe Madden; (back row) James Hurst, deacon chairman; Don G. Nerren, pastor; and Lester Quick.

Did you know?



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

Revival results

Glade, Laurel: April 30-May 1; 24 professions of faith; Danny Lanier, Little Rock, evangelist; Currie Page, Laurel, music; Mike Thompson, pastor.

THANKS, MISS. BAPTISTS

Editor:

For Celebrate Jesus 2000 (CJ2000) Bible distribution, I want to thank Mississippi Baptists for placing over 600,000 Bibles in homes across our state in the past 14 months. In that number was 14,352 Spanish Bibles. We had 63 associations participating, 16 colleges, our Gulfshore Assembly, Parchman Penitentiary, and the Christian Firefighters of Mississippi. These Bibles were made possible by a gift from the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), upon a recommendation by Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer. The Mississippi Evangelism Department was asked to coordinate the orders and distribution.

Our Mississippi Baptist Convention was the only state convention to choose Bible Distribution as our emphasis in CJ 2000. On May 11 the convention board voted to close Bible distribution. Our goal of 500,000 Bibles was exceeded by 100,000. Praise God for all the lives touched by CJ2000 Bible distribution in Mississippi.

Please send your testimonies of Bible distribution to MBCB Evangelism Department at P.O.

Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. We would like to share them with others.

I also need for any associations or churches that may have ordered more Bibles than they distributed to please notify us of that excess number so we can place them in churches that have homes that need them. Please help us to clear any shelves you have of excess CJ2000 Bibles.

A special word of appreciation to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Jim Futral, The Baptist Record, and especially Patsy Bozeman who ordered all 600,000 copies.

Sonny Adkins, director
MBCB Evangelism Dept.
Jackson

THANKS, TOO!

Editor:

On behalf of the entire membership of the Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church in Hong Kong, I say a heartfelt thank you! Through your generous giving, the church was begun as a chapel in 1993. Our first two pastors and their wives were International Mission Board (IMB) personnel. We

became financially independent in 1998 and constituted into an independent church last May. As we celebrate our one-year anniversary, we are reminded of faithfulness of our brothers and sisters in the States.

Do pray for us in this part of the world. We are located next to a large university campus where over 700 scholars from mainland China are studying. In the last two years we have baptized and disciplined eight new believers from the mainland. Each Sunday some 100 people from 18 different countries gather to celebrate our common life in Christ.

Our people have learned to be cheerful givers because of your example.

Over 25% of our income went towards mission causes last year. A total of US \$6,100.00 was given to our 1999 World Missions Offering; we are able to send three-fifths of that amount to IMB to support Southern Baptist missions. We who were once the new mission field have now become co-laborers with you.

You have helped make that happen. God bless you.

Scott Harris, pastor
Clearwater Bay IBC
Hong Kong

Ole Miss BSU raises funds



Donations raised by the Baptist Student Union (BSU) at The University of Mississippi in Oxford helped engineering student Melvin Manickavasagam cover three years of extraordinary medical expenses. Manickavasagam became seriously ill with a rare genetic kidney disease in 1995, just three weeks after he arrived at the university from his native Malaysia. In 1998, he received a liver-and-kidney transplant, resulting in a positive prognosis. Janna Brown of Brandon won lunch with David Cutcliffe, head football coach, for herself and her father, James Brown, when she made a donation to help the international student. Pictured (from left) are James Brown, Janna Brown, Cutcliffe, and Manickavasagam. (BR special photo)

REVIVAL DATES

Highland, Natchez: May 28-31; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Carl Carigan, Shreveport, La., evangelist; Price Harris, also of Shreveport, music; David McGuffee, pastor.

Bellevue (Pontotoc): May 28-31; 7 p.m. each night; Kevin Purdon, guest speaker; Lamar Pickens, pastor.

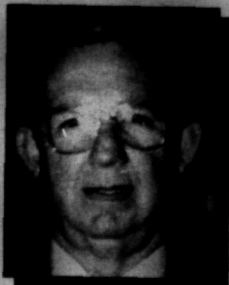
County Line of Dossville, Carthage: June 4-7; 7 p.m.; Ricky McKay, Kosciusko, evangelist; Larry Burchfield, Kosciusko, music.

Park Haven, Laurel: June 4-7; Sunday, morning services and dinner on the grounds; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m. nightly; Norris Ables, minister; Jelly Welborn, music.

STAFF CHANGES

Short Creek, Yazoo Association, called Wayne Miley as pastor on March 26. Miley is a graduate of Mississippi College, Clinton, and New Orleans Seminary. He has served as pastor in Scott and Newton counties. He also served as the director of admissions at Clarke College and president of Central Mississippi Pastoral Services in Ridgeland.

Crossroads Church, Decatur, has called James (Pat) Nations Sr. as pastor effective April 16. He previously served Shivers Church and East Side Church in Simpson Association.



Nations

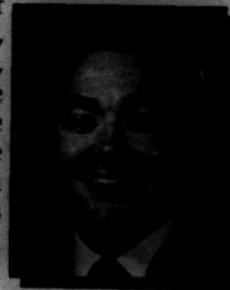
Agricola Church, George Association, has called Tommy N. Snyder as pastor effective May 21. His previous place of service was Walnut

Street Church in Jonesboro, Ark. A native of West Memphis, Ark., Snyder received his Master of Divinity from Southwestern Seminary and his D. Min from Luther Rice Theological Seminary.

Oak Grove Church of Smithdale has recently called Micah C. Rutland as pastor. A graduate of William Carey College, Rutland is currently attending New Orleans Seminary. Churches he previously served are Wanilla, interim pastor; youth minister at Shiloh, Sontag; and senior pastor of Unity, Leakesville.

Renfroe Church, Carthage, has called Murphy Thompson as pastor.

J. Gilman (Gil) McKee is the new pastor of First Church, Tuscaloosa, Ala., effective April 3. McKee is a graduate of Hardin Simmons University and Southwestern Seminary. He



McKee

received his D.Min from Midwestern Seminary.

William E. (Gene) Coley, a native of Natchez, has been called as pastor to Strathmore Church, Paducah, Ky., effective Jan. 1. His previous place of service was Joppa Church, Joppa, Ill. Coley is a graduate of New Orleans Seminary and Southwestern Seminary.

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GOD AS ARTIST

Editor:

In response to the editorial, "Another 'Missing Link' Misses the Mark," some fossil hoaxes were noted, including Archaeoraptor. Indeed, many paleontologists have become dogmatic about the "dinosaur-bird" argument. I don't agree with the "dinosaur-bird" argument, but we can clearly see the link between reptiles and birds. I would argue that birds and dinosaurs do have a close, common, reptilian ancestor. Even birds today still have the scales on their legs and feet, clearly showing their reptilian lineage. Also mentioned was the "Piltdown Man" hoax. There have been similar hoaxes in the Christian community (e.g., Henry Morris' supposed human footprints). Christians get mixed up on the subject of evolution because they think Darwin was an atheist, due to a misunderstanding of the man himself. Darwin was a divinity student with an interest in the biological sciences who became a naturalist.

In his Origin of Species, Darwin acknowledged that supernatural assistance from God was necessary to drive evolution. If Christians would actually sit down and read the book, they would know this. We are told that we should not accept evolution because it implies a not-so-perfect God. Not so! Imagine you are watching an artist. See how much time they spend on their masterpieces. See how often they step back to appreciate their works. I picture God as the consummate artist, constantly stepping back to appreciate his works. I will gladly accept any challenge to a debate.

Michael Williams
Clinton

NURSE REUNION SET

Editor:

The MBH/Gilfoy School of Nursing Alumni Association is planning to hold a reunion on August 5. This would be the perfect time to get together with your classmates and bring yourself up to date on the

changes and progress in their lives. The Alumni Association is eager to update the address registry for our alumni. If you have not received a letter from the association in the past year or so, please contact the secretary-treasurer and give her your present information. If you know the address of a classmate who has moved, we would appreciate that information also. Send information to Joan Pipkin, secretary-treasurer, 106 Pine Ridge Road, Florence, MS 39073.

Margaret Clingan
Jackson

CBF SUPPORTS HUMANISM?

Editor:

According to an article in the April 27 edition of The Baptist Record, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) is set to implement new organization priorities, including leadership training, starting churches, and missions partnerships. I wonder how many Mississippi supporters of the CBF realize as their beloved CBF planned the imple-

mentation of new priorities, several of their leaders were joining with secular humanists in a newly released book?

In the book, Paul D. Simmons is quoted as saying, "I have not come to bury humanism but to praise it." Later he says, "Thank God for humanism." He expresses his support for abortion, which he concludes is a right based on religious liberty. I suppose partially delivering a viable baby and piercing its skull with surgical scissors is an expression of religious freedom for Simmons.

The title of the new book is "Freedom of the New Book: A Baptist/Humanist Dialogue." It concludes with a joint statement, "In Defense of Freedom of Conscience: A Cooperative Baptist/Secular Humanist Declaration." I'm sure Mississippi churches that are aligned with the CBF will want to make this historical work available in their libraries. Perhaps they will also want to include some of its content in their statements of faith.

R. Scott Savell, senior pastor
Little Mount Church
Taylorsville, Kentucky



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Do You Want To Learn More About Prayer?

The Prayer Closet Newsletter will help you grow and mature in Prayer.

It is designed for individuals as well as for the prayer ministry in your church.

Here's what others have to say about Dr. Meador and the newsletter:

I cannot recommend highly enough Kevin Meador's newsletter, **The Prayer Closet**. It is solid, meaty teaching on prayer drawn from the one and only prayer textbook, the Word of God. I look forward to each new issue.

**Jennifer Kennedy Dean, Author - He restores My Soul
Executive Director, The Praying Life Foundation**

Dr. Kevin Meador through his Prayer Closet Ministries, Inc. is truly a blessing. As a Consultant with the Mississippi Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, I have used his materials in many prayer conferences. Through his monthly publication, one experiences his heart that's so sensitive to the leading of the Spirit and very passionate about transforming lives with the message of Christ. It is a joy to recommend this powerful intercessory prayer network.

**Kathy Burns, Women on Mission/Women's Ministry
Mississippi Baptist State Convention**

Kevin Meador, Evangelist, The Prayer Closet Ministries, Decatur, MS, is unique in ministry - he reaches up to God and out to man, and brings a right relationship through the crucified Christ. As president of Conference of Mississippi Baptist Evangelists for AD 2000, I have no reservation recommending him to your fellowship.

**Chester Estes, Jr., Prayer Time Ministries,
Union, MS 39365**



I have followed the ministry of Dr. Kevin Meador with deep personal interest and prayerful support. Since 1962, I have preached in and worked with his and his parent's home church. Upon his surrendering to the gospel ministry, Kevin enrolled in Mississippi College on the Clarke campus. Inasmuch as I had him in several classes, I had opportunity to know him personally and observe his spiritual development. In every course of study with me he proved to be a most capable, conscientious, and cooperative student. His college and seminary degrees testify to his training. This young man's theological stance is thoroughly conservative; his preaching and teaching are Bible-based and Spirit led; and his personal and ministerial focus is prayer-engaging in faithful prayer himself; and encouraging and assisting Christians in many churches to do so. One primary means of so leading them is his "The Prayer Closet," which I receive regularly. I recommend this helpful material to the readers of "The Baptist Record."

Dr. C.H. Melton, Retired: Served for 30 years as Director of Missions, Newton County and Professor of Religious Education at Clarke College, Newton, Mississippi

The NEWLETTER is available to you upon request. Please contact:

**The Prayer Closet Ministries, Inc.
Dr. Kevin Meador
595 Stratton Road
Decatur, MS 39327**

**TELEPHONE: (601) 635-2180
EMAIL: prayercloset_1998@yahoo.com
WEBSITE: prayerclosetministries.org**

Benoit Union to celebrate centennial

Benoit Union Church Centennial will be held on Sunday, May 28. Worship service at 11 a.m. will feature Sarah Barry, Benoit's own missionary, as the principle speaker. General Tom Moore will also be a guest speaker. Dinner on the grounds will be served followed by afternoon activities.

Benoit Union Church, located in Bolivar County, is a reminder that for the last one hundred years, Benoit's Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist congregations have worshipped together as one religious body. For more information on a cookbook that has been compiled, contact Marla Farmer, P.O. Box 239, Benoit, MS 38725. For other information, contact Dana Stubbs at (662) 332-3702 or Renee Vannamen at (662) 742-3806.

LIFE AND WORK

Faithful to the end

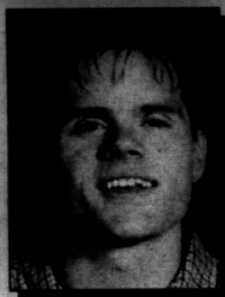
2 Samuel 23:1-7 and 1 Kings 2:1-11

By Matt Loving

In an increasingly technological and secular society, many people feel that they do not or cannot make a positive difference. Some people live in a day-to-day survival mode feeling powerless to make their lives count. Others may think that much of their life has been wasted and it is too late for them to make a difference. Many others put all their energy into establishing careers, making money, and getting things, only to experience dissatisfaction when such things fail to meet their deep need for a meaningful life. God created

humanity to know him and glorify him through a faith-plus-obedience lifestyle. In this final week of study on David's life, it is fitting that we can find ways to make our lives count for God the way he intended.

Maintain a lifelong relationship with God (2 Sam. 23:1-2). David was known for his relationship with the Lord from his youth through his adulthood. He was chosen at a young age to lead God's people, was loved as a singer, and the Spirit spoke through him to God's people. People make their lives count for God when they live each



Loving

and every day in an intimate fellowship with God. One of my favorite contemporary Christian songs, When all is Said and Done, says, "Will they say I loved my family and that I was a faithful friend...you can forget my name and the songs I've sung, every rhyme and every tune. But remember the truth of Jesus' love when all is said and done." (lyrics by Geoff Moore, 1993)

Live a life that blesses others (2 Sam. 23:3-4). The Lord instructs David to share that a ruler must be characterized by righteousness and by reverence for God, one most likely not truly being in existence without the other. We are challenged today to be people whose lives are characterized by reverence for God and are governed by God's laws. No matter what

your current situation, you must ask yourself to honestly consider if your life is focused on growing more intimately in your relationship to God. If your answer is yes, your life is a blessing to others according to God's standards.

Hold to God's promises confidently (2 Sam. 23:5-7). Another way to make your life count God's way is to be ever aware that God is faithful in keeping his promises. In these verses, David recalled God's faithfulness in the past and claimed that as long as his family remained in a right relationship with God they were sure to receive God's promises. We can make our lives count for God by believing God's promises and by allowing them to be appropriated into our lives. It is interesting to note that part of the promises presented include that evildoers will be punished.

Challenge future generations to be faithful (1 Kings 2:1-4). As David's death neared, he encouraged his son with some "famous last words." He challenged Solomon to be strong, to walk in the Lord's ways, and to obey the Lord's commandments. David knew firsthand the importance of the reality of these principles and what it means to seek after God's heart. Even while he was devoted to the Lord, he was not perfect. David stood as an example of God using imperfect people to accomplish his purposes and also of one in whom sin was not overlooked but judged harshly. Another way that people make their lives count for God is by instructing the next generation to live even more faithfully to God than they have learned to do.

Loving is minister of youth at Oak Hill Church, Poplarville.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Doing your own thing

Judges 17:1-8, 12-13; 18:30-31

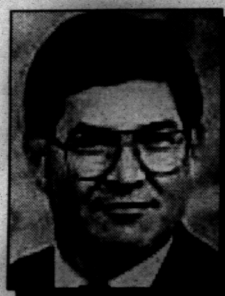
By Keith Smyser

Many people today do not believe in absolute truth. By not believing in any absolutes (truth) in life, you are free to choose what "truth" you will follow. The "truth" you follow can be yours, another person's truth, or any combination you choose. Scripture tells us in John 14:6 that Jesus is the truth! Yet, many people trust their own ideas rather than scripture. Is this a new way of thinking? Check out this week's lesson!

Self-centered morality (17:1-2). In a do-it-yourself religion one can steal and be blessed by the one they had stolen from. These were dark days in Israel's history. Micah

(no connection with Micah the prophet) had stolen silver from his own mother! The name Micah in its shortened form carries the ironic meaning, "who is like Yahweh?" or "Yahweh, the incomparable." The Micah in Judges 17 certainly does not reflect the character of his names' meaning. Micah's actions are also characteristic of one who acknowledges the Lord only in a superficial way. How else could he justify the breaking of one the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:15)?

Research from both the Gallup organization and the George Barna organization continues to point out that there is no appreciable difference in the



Smyser

character, conduct, and ethics of Christians versus non-Christians. How should God's Word influence how we live and conduct ourselves today?

Homemade gods (17:3-6). Apparently, Micah and his mother decided to use a "set up your own shrine kit." His mother, after dedicating silver to the Lord, allowed it to be fashioned into an idol in clear violation of the Law of Moses (Ex. 20:4, 23). In an effort to make the best possible "homemade shrine," Micah appointed one of his sons as priest. A violation of the law of Moses occurred once again as only the sons of Aaron could serve as priests (Num. 18:1-7).

While it is obvious that idolatry was and is wrong, this mother and son team were doing what had become socially acceptable during that day. Furthermore, idolatry is an attempt to bring God down to our level so we can

control him. The powerful words of verse six remind us that both then and today people want to do what they feel is right in their own eyes!

Our "homemade gods" may look a little different today but could include success, achievements, fame, and financial security, to name a few. "Homemade gods" include anything that squeezes the one true God out of the number one place in our lives! What are you "worshipping?"

Materialistic religion (17:7-8, 12-13). What is in for me? Micah hired a Levite who was passing through to serve as his personal priest. Micah and the young Levite were hoping to be blessed by God by their course of action. Micah was seeking to buy God's favor by employing a more "appropriate" priest. The young Levite was hoping to improve his lot in life.

Can you think of situations where so called "religious organizations" seem to be making a

profit instead of investing in people's lives?

Expanding corruption (18:30-31). The far-reaching impact of Micah's bad example (sin) was evident by actions taken by the Danites. The people from the tribe of Dan stole some of Micah's homemade gods (18:27-29). The Danites continued to violate the clear directives of the Law of Moses by worshipping idols and allowing non-Levites to serve as priests. "No need to follow the Law of Moses when you can establish your own religious practices," Micah and the tribe of Dan must have thought.

Micah and the Danites are good examples of bad examples. Neither Micah nor the Danites followed or lived by God's Word. Micah and the tribe of Dan wanted to control their lives rather than allowing the creator of the universe to guide their life. Who is in control of your life?

Smyser is associate pastor of First Church, Starkville.

FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

From confrontation to growth

2 Corinthians 13:1-13

By Neel Grantham

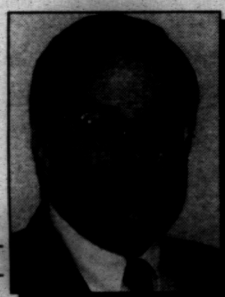
The Apostle Paul certainly had his hands full dealing with the Corinthian church. Everything from carnality to factions to worldliness to open sinfulness caused problems in his ministry to this church. Chapters 10-13 reveal that Paul also had some enemies who questioned his apostleship. As we read 12:20-21 we see problems are deeper than just questioning his authority.

If you are a parent, use that position of authority to relate to Paul's situation with the Corinthians. No loving parent wants to constantly ride their children with confrontation and correction. Hopefully, a

gentle rebuke will suffice and encouragement and edification can follow. That's what Paul desired for the Corinthians.

As we read this passage our lesson is taken from, let us place ourselves in the position of the Corinthians. As believers we must learn how to respond to disciplinary correction. When that gentle rebuke comes, let us learn to look inwardly with God's help rather than reacting outwardly in defensiveness.

Appropriate rebuke (vv. 1-4). This is a stern warning given to divisive people and indulging sinners that the Apostle had already had deal-



Grantham

ings with. If they were not willing to repent, he would have to be more severe in his treatment of them. If they were seeking proof that Christ was speaking in him, he would oblige them by demonstrating the power of God. While the life of Christ demonstrated humility and at least to the world, weakness, he was raised by God's power. That power would be the correcting tool the Apostle would use not just in discipline, but also in service to the Corinthians.

Apt response (vv. 5-8). The purpose of warnings and rebukes is to restore. As we should do regularly anyway, examining ourselves gives God the opportunity to be the loving parent who desires to gently rebuke. Paul encouraged them to first of all make sure they passed the test of faith. God works in the lives of his legitimate children to

make them more and more like Jesus. Those who are in Christ, Paul refers to as reprobates. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words defines reprobate as one rejected, not standing the test. The test of course is whether Christ is in a person. If you pass the test, then take correction and rebuke in the proper manner. Don't immediately be defensive as if you are incapable of wrongdoing. Instead you should turn to God and be willing to seek the truth of the matter. We sometimes overlook sin in our lives, but God will reveal that to us. Then we should confess it, repent, and thank God for his forgiveness.

Paul then encouraged them to do what is right. As our lives line up by God's plumb line of truth, we will walk in truth. So let us live our lives as those who pass the test.

Anticipated results (vv. 9-13). Paul was planning to return to Corinth. He was

afraid he would have to exert his apostolic authority and to some degree clean house of those with bad attitudes and motives, and those who practiced immorality. That certainly was not his desire. His desire was for them to be strong and grow unto perfection. He wrote this letter so things could be cleared up before he arrived. Then when he came he could use this authority to edify rather than tear down. His desire was to build them up and move them into position to be the church God wanted them to be. Verse 11 encouraged them to strive for perfection, to be of one mind, and live in peace. Those were the results he hoped would take place.

These are the characteristics churches today should strive for. As this takes place, God in all his love and peace will be with you.

Grantham is pastor of Pineview Church, Clinton.

THE VILLAGE VIEW



Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

FEBRUARY 1-29, 2000 MEMORIALS

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Mr. & Mrs. Arthur C. Lamkin
Corrine Haggard
Ms. Elizabeth Childs
Mrs. Brenda Hailey
Mr. & Mrs. Ted Skipper
Mrs. Bonnie Hall
Mr. & Mrs. W. L. Ivey
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Mr. & Mrs. Buddy Neal and
Jason

Service pins awarded



T. Williams and Nixon



D. Williams and Nixon

Todd and DeeDee Williams and Dale Jackson of the Farrow Manor campus in Independence, were all awarded one-year service pins by Ed Nixon, BCV area administrator for North Mississippi.



Jackson and Nixon

HBU trustees move toward autonomy

HOUSTON (BP) — Houston Baptist University (HBU) trustees have declared their autonomy from the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) in an effort to stop the removal of some trustees who attended churches that "did not meet the threshold requirements of being a BGCT cooperating church."

Keith Bruce, director of the BGCT's Christian Education Coordinating Board, told Baptist Press there is not a financial requirement to be considered a cooperating church.

BGCT Executive Director Charles Wade, in a prepared statement, questioned the university's action. "The unilateral action taken by the trustees of Houston Baptist University violates the constitution of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the principles by which the university and convention have worked together," Wade said.

"It seriously challenges the trust, cooperation, and understanding that for more than 40 years has existed between the university and the Baptist General Convention of Texas."

Wade said the BGCT was shocked and caught off guard by the trustees' decision. The vote puts in jeopardy nearly \$1.5 million that the state convention contributes to HBU's \$28 million annual budget.

Bibliocipher

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T GAJAAQZ KXM
SZANACXNA, GNASZAB,
GK SZA LANQTAJ XC YXE,
SZDS KA ONAJABS KXMN
GXETAJ D VTITBY
JDQNTCTQA, ZXVK,
DQQAOSDGVA MBSX
YXE, FZTQZ TJ KXMN
NADJXBDGVA JANITQA.

NXLDBJ SFAVIA: XBA

Clue: G = B

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Eight: Twelve.

Blackaby 'transitioning' to new ministry

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — Don't even suggest that Henry Blackaby is retiring. Rather, he is "transitioning" from being an employee of three Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) agencies to a new ministry called, appropriately, Henry Blackaby Ministries.

The 65-year old best-selling author and speaker ended his unique joint employment relationship in April with the SBC's publishing agency, LifeWay Christian Resources, and its two mission boards, the North American Mission Board (NAMB) and the International Mission Board. Although his new ministry organization will work across denominational lines, he said he is still firmly committed to the Southern Baptist Convention, its organizational entities, and his local church, First Church of Jonesboro, Ga.

"Each of the presidents of the three SBC agencies I've worked for has asked me to continue to work with them in a consulting relationship," Blackaby explained, "but I'll be able to more freely decide which meetings to attend and which efforts to be involved in within the context of the new ministry."

Blackaby said he will continue to write and speak concerning revival and spiritual awakening through his new ministry, as well as focus on spiritual leadership development for pastors, denominational leaders, and lay leaders.

"The constant request from leaders is, 'Would you help us know the kind of leader we're supposed to be, that God uses?'" Blackaby said. "I don't see much today but a mix of the ways of the world and some Scripture, and God never does that. Our people are reading the books and ideas of men and mixing in some Scripture, and God will not honor that."

Henry Blackaby Ministries already has a staff, a monthly newsletter, a daily radio program, and an Internet site, www.henry-blackaby.com.

Also, a board of advisers of Christian businessmen is in place.

The staff includes former colleagues and writing partners Kerry Skinner and Henry Brandt. Tony Stinson, formerly with Global Focus Inc., serves as executive director, and Blackaby's son, Norman, will develop a spiritual leadership training center in Toronto, Canada.

Following graduation from Golden Gate Seminary, Blackaby served as pastor of churches in California and his native Canada. He was hired as director of prayer and spiritual awakening by the former SBC Home Mission Board in 1988, and six years later was jointly employed in a similar

capacity by the SBC's three largest agencies. His discipleship study, "Experiencing God," has sold 3.5 million copies, been translated into more than 40 languages, and spawned dozens of discipleship products and conferences.

Blackaby told Baptist Press he feels his ministry has had some role in turning the Christian community "back to the Scripture and to a personal relationship with God, but I don't believe we're out of the woods as far as God's judgment is concerned. I cry for revival but also for God to withhold his judgment upon us and turn his people back to him so he can change our nation."

His "heartcry" for Southern Baptists, he said, is a return to a relationship with God "that he can use to turn a nation back to himself. I think Southern Baptists still have the potential of being the catalyst to pull all evangelical groups together and see a nation come back to God."

"I think that window of opportunity will not always be open. If we do not pull together with one heart and one mind around a relationship with God on his conditions, we're of no use to God."

"Southern Baptists are fracturing," he added. "Too many are doing their own thing, and we've lost our interdependence. The '60s produced an independence that we have not gotten over. I think the single greatest need is to return to a sovereign interdependence among the people of God."

Blackaby said he and his wife, Marilynn, look forward to spending more time with their five children — all of whom are involved in ministry in the U.S., Canada, and Europe — and 13 grandchildren.

"If there was ever a time in their lives and ministries when they needed us to walk alongside them, it's now," Blackaby said.

"Our grandchildren hardly know us, and we need to make an investment in them as well," Marilynn Blackaby added.

SBC promotion of Disney alternatives questioned

RALEIGH, N.C. (ABP) — A denominational newspaper editor has taken Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) leaders to task for promoting a travel agency that offers discount tickets from Disney competitors Universal Studios and Sea World while they continue to encourage Southern Baptists to boycott Disney during the 2000 SBC annual meeting in Orlando this summer.

In an editorial in the North Carolina newspaper Biblical Recorder, editor Tony Cartledge said Southern Baptists who avoid Disney ought to be just as concerned about other Orlando attractions.

The SBC's Web site has added a link to The Orlando Experience, a group that caters mainly to Christian groups and bills itself as an information site for "family-friendly vacations."

"This promotion raises serious ethical issues," Cartledge wrote.

Sea World is owned by brewer Anheuser-Busch. The Universal Studios theme park is part of a subsidiary of the Seagram Company Ltd., one of the world's largest distillers. Universal's parent company, like Disney companies, produces several R-rated movies a year.

"Try to imagine the number of homes that are shattered, the number of children who are abused, the number of jobs that are lost, the number of cars that are wrecked, the number of people who die each year as a direct result of persons using the products these companies produce and promote," Cartledge said.

"Is this not a moral issue for Southern Baptists? If not, why not?"

The SBC voted in 1996 to join several other Christian organizations in boycotting The Disney Company and its subsidiaries.

"Stated reasons were that Disney promotes immorality through its entertainment divisions, and that the company endorses homosexual lifestyles by offering benefits to same-sex partners of employees and by hosting 'Gay Days' events each June at the Orlando theme park," Cartledge wrote — but he pointed out that Disney is not unique in providing some of those benefits.

"Those who are concerned with the implicit endorsement of homosexuality should know that the Seagram Company and its subsidiaries provide the same kind of same-sex domestic partner benefits that Disney offers, according to the Human Rights Campaign Web site."

"In addition, 'Gay Day' activities will be held at all three parks during the event scheduled May 30-June 5. The official 'Gay Days' Web site predicts that 150,000 gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and others are expected for this year's 10th anniversary gathering. Official outings are planned at Universal Studios, Sea World Orlando, 11 and Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, along with Disney World and several other venues."

"If it is right for Southern Baptists to boycott one company for promoting immorality and endorsing homosexual practices, can it also be right to support

other companies which are not only in the same boat, but which could float the boat with their beer and liquor production?" Cartledge asked.

Turning back an attempt last year to change the venue for this year's convention, SBC leaders assured that Southern Baptists would give a "powerful witness" in Orlando by refusing to patronize Disney.

"If Southern Baptists shun Mickey Mouse only to link up with the Budweiser frogs, what kind of 'powerful witness' is that?" Cartledge asked.

SBC convention manager Jack Wilkerson said some concerns have been voiced about the theme parks' connections with liquor companies, but he added there is also a positive side to supporting those parks.

Sea World and Universal officials have been very open to Christian groups reserving space to present evangelistic programs in their parks, he said.

Wilkerson, the SBC Executive Committee's vice president for business and finance, said the primary goal is to provide families vacation options.

"We're not going to do Disney," he said. "We felt like some alternative was appropriate. The only other alternative was to do absolutely nothing."

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a splinter group for moderates at odds with the SBC's conservative leaders, is also meeting in Orlando this summer, but it is offering discounted tickets to Disney World.